of them was held to be of a mild nature. Out of the 7 held substantially blameworthy, petitions of 2 of them have been received. These 2 petitions are under examination.

Agitation by Coast Guard Personnel of Fifth Pay Commission Recommendations

4. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Coast Guard Personnel have been agitating for removal of certain disparities and anomalies in their pay and allowances arising from decisions taken on the Fifth Pay Commission recommendations relating to them;

(b) if so, the details of the disparities and anomalies; and

(c) the steps taken to resolve the same?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) There have been representations from the Coast Guard personnel about their discontentment over the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission and the decisions taken thereon.

(b) and (c) The pay scales of Coast Guard (CG) personnel broadly correspond to the pay scales for personnel in the Central Police Organisations (CPOs) such as BSF. Whereas Coast Guard personnel have been provided the replacement scales as recommended by the Fifth Pay Commission, the pay scales of personnel of CPOs were further rationalised with effect from 10.10.97, over and above the Fifth Pay Commission awards. The implication of the aforesaid revision is under examination and a final view will be taken in consultation with the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure).

Seizure of Ships with Arms and Ammunition

5. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Coast Guards of Indian Navy have seized ships containing arms and ammunition in the sea near Andaman and Nicobar Islands recently,

(b) if so, the details of the action taken by Government; and

(c) if the action has not been completed so far, by when it would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) In a combined Services operation conducted by the Army, Navy, Air Force and the Coast Guard in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands on the 10/11 February, 1998, 73 gunrunners, two gun boats and two trawlers containing arms and ammunition were captured.

(b) and (c) The Central Bureau of Investigation has been entrusted with the responsibility of investigation of the case which is subjudice.

Spying on Indian War-ships

6. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the spying on Indian war-ships by Australian surveillance aircrafts;

(b) if so, since when the spying is going on;

(c) whether Government have lodged any protest to Australian Government on the matter; and

(d) if so, reaction of the Australian Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Five incidents of surveillance of Indian warships by Australian